

house plants, but in this state, will bloom in the open air, with very little protection. It is usual, at the North, to procure the bulbs in August or September. But in Florida, it would be better to wait until later in the fall, as our cool weather does not come so early as at the North. The Rural New Yorker tells of some extra good strains and a new variety:

Fischer's Purity Freesia.—Last year Rudolph Fischer, Great Neck, L. I., offered under the name of Purity, a new and particularly free-flowering Freesia, evidently developed by long selection from the commercial Freesia refracta, so extensively grown by florists for winter bloom. Corms were procured in August for trial on the Rural Grounds, and potted up about the end of the month, placing three each in six-inch pots of rich but very light compost. The pots were kept outside, exposed to the weather until frost threatened, receiving no care further than weeding and regular watering. Sprouts appeared in November after housing under glass in an average temperature of 60 degrees, and the plants grew so vigorously that at blooming time in January they were over 20 inches high, with many branching flower scapes. The three plants in the best pot opened 218 perfect blooms, and none fell below 195 blooms to the pot. Some of the best branches had 11 fine blooms, though the average Freesia does not often bear more than five or six to a branch or axis. The individual flowers were large, well-rounded and of a very good white color, with scarcely a trace of the common and objectionable yellow in the throat. The fragrance was pleasing, but much fainter than in most florists' Freesias. The strong growth and extreme abundance of bloom make this a very desirable variety, though it is scarcely as pure in coloring, nor as richly fragrant, as best strains of the usual type. The originator says that Purity may be grown to cut two feet long. The effect of the long sprays of graceful blooms is very pleasing. There is little doubt concerning the value of this fine new Freesia for greenhouse use and for the window garden as well.

Freesias, Old and New.—The Freesia is native to the Cape of Good Hope and has been in cultivation nearly 100 years, being always much appreciated for the distinct horizontal manner its pretty little trumpet-formed blooms are carried, and their pleasing apricot perfume that appears to be liked by everyone. Quite a number of varieties from the original Freesia refracta, which appears to have often been of unpleasing greenish or sulphurous shades, and to have few flowers on a raceme or axis, and these much bulged in the tube or twisted about so as to point different ways. The effort in breeding always has been toward pure white, symmetrically formed on the axis. The best results of this long and rigid selection are sold under the general name of F. refracta alba. Millions of the tooth-shaped bulbs of corms are grown in Italy, Holland and California and sold during late summer to florists for winter blooms. There is always a tendency to revert to the original yellow, which, indeed, can usually be traced in the form of a more or less pronounced orange blotch in the throat of even the whitest specimen. California-grown corms appear to be the

greatest offenders in this line, the per cent. of off-color blooms rising quite high even where carefully grown. The strong Pacific Coast sunlight is blamed for this persistence of objectionable coloring, but at any rate the foreign stock appears more reliable in this respect. A very vigorous yellow-tinted variety, known as F. Leichtlin, was discovered some years ago in an Italian botanic garden, and is now quite a favorite in the mail trade for window garden purposes, but is seldom used by florists, who want the whitest blooms they can get. F. Leichtlini has many and large blooms, though not highly perfumed, and being of good constitution is easily grown. F. aurea is almost distinct enough to be considered a separate species. It is a small plant, producing rather bell-shaped orange or lemon yellow, scentless blooms, much twisted about on the axis. It has been used with good effect in producing, by hybridization, clear yellow varieties occasionally offered by seedsmen. Italian growers catalogue pink, purple and rose varieties of F. refracta. We have imported and grown about all, and find the colors too faint and washy to be attractive.

A New Pink Species.—Up to four years ago, botanists regarded all known varieties of Freesia as belonging to the one variable species, F. refracta, but a very distinct pink or lilac-flowered kind having been found in Cape Colony, it was given the name of F. Armstrongi. It is still very scarce, small corms costing 75 cents each in Europe. Some specimens were received at the Rural Grounds from a Holland dealer, but they turned out to be diseased, and never started into growth. Later two corms, fresh from an African collector, were sent over by the dealer, and one started its first leaf in February, opening its blooms late in April. It makes a neat plant, about a foot high. The leaves are small and darker green than those of F. refracta. The flowers are considerably smaller in size and of a bright and pleasing rosy lilac with yellow throat and blotch. The fragrance is characteristic, but much less pronounced than in our familiar varieties. This plant bore 32 blooms on five branches, many were open at the same time, and made a good decorative effect. We pollenized the flowers with the best examples of F. refracta at hand, but this crossing has already been made in Holland, and the offspring has even been exhibited under the name of Freesia Tubergeni. The hybrid is said to be very fine; the blooms large and freely produced, of a very acceptable pink shade with conspicuous yellow throat, while the rich fragrance of Refracta is well retained. Florists say colored Freesias are never likely to be useful for their purposes, but they will certainly be wanted by amateurs and window gardeners. Freesia Armstrongi is a very welcome addition to our short list of fragrant winter-blooming plants, and its hybrids are certain of great appreciation, if they are real improvements on the species.

The Growing of Water Cress.

We have mentioned the fact that water cress has been successfully grown in this state and sold in Jacksonville. We do not think that it has been a source of much profit to the grower but this was owing to his

ignorance, not to lack of market for a good quality of water cress. The Rural Californian tells how it should be grown:

The small farmer having a lot through which runs a spring creek is not making the most of his opportunities unless he utilizes it for the growing of water cress. This incomparable salad plant is coming more and more into favor every year, and city dwellers are willing to pay good prices for it, especially as it comes on after they have wearied of lettuce and similar materials. It has the advantage of being both easily grown and marketed, and farmers' wives and daughters may take this part of the market into their hands to care for, with much benefit to both health and pocketbook. If the cress patch must be started from seed, the seed-bed should be made as early in the spring as possible. A good place is the low, wet ground about the spring itself. Scatter the seed here quite thickly, and press it into the ground with a hoe. When the plants are large enough to transplant, see that the ground is in good condition. Of course, where the plants can be purchased from a seed house it is better to do this, as much time will be saved in getting the plants started to grow.

When the cress has spread pretty well over the water in the ditch go over the entire bed and clip the tops that show above the water with a sickle. This does away with the leaves that have been long in growing, and are therefore inclined to toughness; and gives the plants a new start which will insure uniform tenderness. After this first clipping divide the bed into sections, three or four, according to the size of the space planted, and beginning at the first one, clip off the tops as soon as they begin again to attain size and strength, being careful to remove the litter from the bed. The next week clip the next section and so on through the season, clipping alternately, and always keeping one or two sections from which cress may be taken for market, and having one or more in the growing and freshly clipped stage. This will insure you having crisp cress during the entire season, which would not be the case were

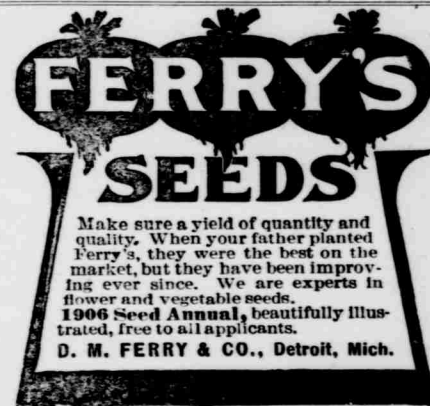
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the whole bed clipped at one time, as time would necessarily be lost waiting for the cress to grow again. Also if the whole bed were marketable at once, there might be a larger quantity than could be disposed of before it lost its crispness. Cut the cress by hand with a sharp knife; that for market being cut in stalks about three inches long. A bunch large enough for the loose tops to comfortably fill an ordinary strawberry box is large enough for market, the grocers buying by the dozen bunches.

Henry T. White, of the Chicago Tribune, who is one of the closest observers of conditions in the horse breeding industry, says: "I can not see where the supply is to come from to meet the demand of the next five or six years at least. No one will deny the fact that prices and demand are better than at any time in the past ten years, and it would appear as though, if the horses are in the country, owners would be anxious to take advantage of the situation and realize the high dollar on their holdings. In conversation with the head of the leading auction sale business in Kentucky recently, he informed me that in spite of their best efforts, the number of horses consigned to their coming sale was far less than he had a right to expect, considering the favorable conditions of the market and that the low average of three horses to a consigner told the story. He also called attention to the significant fact that there were but three or four of the big stock farms left in the blue grass region, farms where they breed twenty-five mares or more per year, and that the smaller breeders had curtailed their operations in proportion."